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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the proceedings of an international 2-day conference in Orlando, Florida that was supported by the National Science Foundation. At the conference, practitioners, employers, policymakers, and researchers raised and debated issues surrounding two-year colleges. The themes of the conference reflected increasing demands by employers for technical competencies and skill standards, as well as the growing importance of entrepreneurial skills and work habits as industry downsizes and jobs are replaced by "economic opportunities." Participants and speakers included representatives of the newly-formed Trans-Atlantic Technology and Training Alliance (TA3), a consortium of southern U.S. and European technical institutes created to establish a long-term framework for the exchange of information between the U.S. and Europe. Policymakers in every industrialized nation are struggling with the seemingly never-ending problems of preparing youth for the changing face of work. Information-based technologies and more systematic and interdisciplinary approaches to solving production problems are reshaping both forms of work and modes of learning. This report on the conference proceedings is divided into the following sections: (1) "Preparing Technicians for the Next Century"; (2) "Skill Standards in Changing Work Environments"; (3) "Overcoming Adversity"; (4) "Forging New Alliances"; (5) "Summary Discussion"; (6) "Agenda"; and (7) "List of Participants." (NB)

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